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tinomy with his own faith and conduct (conflict of principles and maxims), patent to all who choose to note.

§ 53. The practical problem which we have to solve is not emancipation from, but control of, nature. In other words, the duty of man is to maintain the supremacy of reason, not to uproot the necessity of nature.

Out of this struggle comes ethic growth, the true virile strength, the highest virtue. And since a mere man cannot arrogantly assume to state the ends of human existence, yet is impelled by the necessity of his rational nature and method to project some end toward which he must aim, he finds the highest satisfaction in declaring as end (for him, so far as he can know) virtue, which consists solely in the ceaseless endeavor to obey the law of reason.

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE DOCTRINE OF A UNIVERSAL SPIRIT.

Written in 1702, and translated from the French of G. W. LEIBNITZ, by A. E. KROEGER.

[The following essay will no doubt be welcomed by all who have found it difficult to fully understand Leibnitz's *Monadology*, published in No. 3, vol. i., of this Journal. In the present essay Leibnitz touches and states with the utmost clearness two of the three great principles of his philosophy: the doctrine of Monads—here called particular souls—and the doctrine of a Preestablished Harmony. It will be well to read also, in connection with this article, Leibnitz on the "Active Force of the Body, the Soul, and the Souls of Animals," published in No. 1, vol. ii., of this Journal.—EDITOR.]

Many ingenious persons have believed and believe yet to-day that there is only one spirit, which is universal and which animates all the universe and all of its parts, each according to its structure and according to the organs which it encounters, just as the same breath of air causes the various pipes of an organ to sound differently; and that thus when an animal has its organs in good order this spirit creates therein the effect of a particular soul, whereas when these organs become corrupt that particular soul turns into nothing, or, so to speak, returns into the ocean of the universal spirit.

Aristotle has appeared to many as having held a somewhat similar opinion, which was renewed by the celebrated Arabian philosopher Averroes. He believed that there was in us an *intellectus agens*, or active intellect, and an *intellectus patiens*, or passive intellect; and that the former, coming from without, was eternal and universal for all; whereas the latter, being particular in each one, vanished at the death of the individual. This doctrine was that of some *Peripatetics*—as Pomponatius, Contarenus, and others—for some two or three centuries; and we meet the traces of it in the late Mr. Naudé, as is shown by his letters and by the *Naudeana* which have since been printed. They entrusted it secretly to their most intimate and able disciples; but were clever enough to say in public, that this doctrine, though certainly true according to philosophy—whereby they meant the philosophy of Aristotle particularly—was nevertheless false according to the faith of the Church. Hence arose the disputes concerning double truth, which was condemned in the last Lateran Council.

I have been told that the Queen Christine had a great inclination in favor of this opinion, and, seeing that Mr. Naudé, who was her librarian, was imbued with it, it is quite likely that he had given her the information which he had gathered concerning these secret doctrines from the celebrated philosophers he had met in Italy. Spinoza, who admits only one single substance, is not far removed from the doctrine of a single universal spirit; and even the New Cartesians, who pretend that God alone acts, establish it without being aware of their doing so. It seems also that Molinos, and some other New Quietists, amongst others a certain author who calls himself Joannes Angelus Silesius, who wrote before Molinos, and whose works have recently been reprinted—nay, even Weigelius before them both—have fallen into this opinion of a sabbath or repose of the souls in God. This is why they believed that the cessation of our particular functions was the highest state of perfection.

It is true that the *Peripatetics* did not hold this spirit to be altogether universal; for, besides the intelligences which, according to them, animated the stars, they had an intelligence for this lower world, which intelligence performed the function

of an active intellect in the souls of men. They were brought to this doctrine of an immortal universal soul for all men by a false reasoning. For they supposed that an actual infinite multitude were impossible; and that therefore it were not possible that there could be an infinite number of souls,—which, however, they argued, must be possible if such things as particular souls exist. For the world being, according to them, eternal, and the human race likewise eternal, and new souls being always born, there would necessarily be an actual infinity of souls if they all subsisted.

This reasoning appeared to them to be a demonstration. But it was full of false suppositions. For we admit them neither the impossibility of an actual infinity, nor that the human race has existed eternally, nor the generation of new souls; even the Platonists teaching the preexistence of souls, and the Pythagoreans the metempsychosis of souls, holding that a certain determined number of souls always remains and performs its revolutions.

The doctrine of a universal spirit is good in itself, for all those who teach it admit in fact the existence of a Divinity; whether they believe this universal spirit to be supreme, in which case they hold it to be God himself, or whether they believe, like the Cabbalists, that God has created it, which was also the opinion of the Englishman Henry More and of some other new philosophers, particularly of certain chemists, who have believed that there is a universal Archeus or World-soul; and some have asserted this World-soul to signify that Spirit of the Lord, which floated over the waters, spoken of in Genesis.

But when men go so far as to say that this universal spirit is the only spirit, and that there are no particular souls or spirits, or, at least, that these particular souls ever cease to exist, they pass, as I believe, the boundaries of reason, and advance without any support a doctrine of which we cannot even entertain a distinct conception. Let us examine a little the apparent reasons on which this doctrine might be based, a doctrine that does away with the immortality of the soul, and degrades the human race, or rather all living creatures, from that rank which appertains to them, and which has generally been attributed to them. For it seems to me that

an opinion of this extensive character ought to be proved, and that it is not enough to have simply an imagined notion of it, founded on nothing but a very crippled comparison taken from the air that animates the pipes of an organ.

I have shown so far, that the pretended demonstration of the Peripatetics, who held that there was only one spirit common to all men, is of no force, and based altogether on false suppositions. Spinoza has pretended to demonstrate that there is only one single substance in the world, but his demonstrations are pitiable or non-intelligible. The New Cartesians, finally, who believe that it is God alone who acts, have given very little proof of it; and Malebranche, moreover, seems to admit at least the internal action of the particular or individual spirits.

One of the most apparent reasons that have been alleged against the particular souls is that men have been troubled about their origin. The scholastic philosophers have disputed much on the origin of forms, which they understood to include souls. Opinions have been much divided as to whether there occurred an eduction of the force of matter, as the figure is cut out of the marble; or a translation of souls, a new soul arising out of a preceding one just as a fire is kindled by another fire; or whether the souls existed previously, and merely made themselves known after the generation of the body; or, finally, whether the souls were newly created by God each time there occurred a new generation.

Those who denied particular or individual souls believed that the fact of these disputes relieved them of all difficulty; but that was simply cutting the knot instead of untying it. There is no force whatever in an argument like this: men differ in the explication of a doctrine; hence that whole doctrine is false. This is the way in which skeptics reason, and if it were admissible there would be nothing which might not be repudiated. The experiments of our time lead us to believe that the souls and even the animals have always existed, although in small volume, and that generation is nothing but a species of augmentation.* By this all the dif-

* This sentence expresses in a clear condensed manner the essence of Leibnitz's *Monad-doctrine*.—*Translator's note*.

difficulties about the generation of forms and souls disappear. This does not imply, however, that we deny God the right to create new souls, or to give a higher degree of perfection to those that have already a bodily existence in nature; we speak here simply of that which is common in nature, without entering into the particular economy of God respecting the souls of men, which may be privileged, being infinitely above the souls of the animals. What, in my opinion, has also much contributed to imbue ingenious persons with the doctrine of one single universal spirit is this, that the vulgar philosophers propounded a doctrine concerning the separate souls, and the functions of the soul independent of the body and its organs, which they could not sufficiently justify. They had great reason to desire to sustain the immortality of the soul as conformable to the divine perfections and to a true morality; but, seeing that in death the organs which we perceive in animals are deranged and finally corrupted, they believed themselves obliged to have recourse to separate souls; that is, to believe, that the soul subsisted without any body, and did not cease its thoughts and functions after having lost the body. In order to prove this better, they moreover endeavored to show that the soul has even in this life abstract thoughts independent of all material notions. But those who rejected this separate state and this independence as contrary to experience and reason, were thus led all the more to believe in the extinction of the particular soul, and the permanency of the one universal spirit.

I have carefully examined this matter, and have shown that there are veritably in the soul some objects of thought or of the intellect which the external senses do not furnish; namely, the soul itself and its functions*—*nihil est in intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu, nisi ipse intellectus*;—and those who uphold the universal spirit will easily agree to this since they distinguish it from matter: but, nevertheless, I find that there is never an abstract thought which is not accompanied by some material images or traces, and I have established a perfect parallelism between that which occurs

* This is precisely Kant's point: that all our knowledge is empirical except the knowledge of knowledge itself; and that, hence, a science of metaphysics is possible only as a science of knowledge.—*Translator's note.*

in the soul and that which happens in the material world,* having demonstrated that the soul with its functions is something altogether distinct from matter, but that nevertheless it is always accompanied by organs which must respond to it, and that this relation is reciprocal and will remain so always.†

Now so far as the complete separation of body and soul is concerned—although I can say nothing in regard to the laws of grace and to what God has ordained concerning the human and particular souls, beyond what the Scriptures say—since these are things we cannot know through reason, depending as they do upon revelation itself and God himself—I see no reason, neither of philosophy nor of religion, which would oblige me to abandon the doctrine of the parallelism of body and soul, and to adopt in its place the doctrine of a complete separation. For why cannot the soul always retain a subtle body, organized according to its condition, which might even resume some day—on resurrection—that part of its visible body which is necessary; since we do accord to the blessed a glorious body, and since the fathers of the Church have accorded a subtle body to the angels?‡

This supposition is, moreover, conformable to the order of nature, as established by experiments; for the observations of very able observers induce us to think that the animals do not commence to exist as the vulgar think, and that the seed-animals or the animated seeds have subsisted ever since the beginning of things, and that, since order and reason demand that that which has existed from the beginning also should have no end, thus just as generation is nothing but the growth of an animal, transformed and developed, so also death can be nothing but the diminution of an animal, transformed and enveloped, and that the animal should remain the same during all these transformations just as the silkworm and the butterfly

* In his doctrine of the Preëstablished Harmony.—*Translator's note.*

† This same point, of the soul being eternally accompanied by bodily organs, is particularly dwelt upon in Fichte's "Facts of Consciousness."—*Translator's note.*

‡ The younger Fichte, and indeed most of the German philosophers of this day, are developing this point of a more subtle body growing in us during life and becoming our habitation after death, with especial force in their writings on psychological as well as anthropological science.—*Translator's note.*

are the same animal. It is well to remark here that nature has the cleverness and kindness to discover to us its secrets in some small examples in order to lead our judgment concerning the rest, everything being corresponding and harmonious. It is this that nature shows in the transformation of the caterpillar and other insects—for the flies also come from maggots—so that we should be led to divine that there are transformations everywhere. The observation of insects has thus also done away with the vulgar opinion that these animals generate each other by their nourishment, without propagation. It is thus also that nature has shown us in the birds an example of the generation of all animals from eggs, which all recent discoveries have compelled us to admit. This is also the result of the experiments made with the microscope, whereby it has been proved that the butterfly is nothing but a development of the caterpillar, but chiefly that the seeds contain already the plant or the animal full-shaped, although transformation and nutrition or growth should afterwards be necessary to make of the seed one of those animals that are perceptible to our ordinary senses. And as the smaller insects generate themselves in this way by the propagation of the species, we must assume the same of those little seed-animals; that is, that they also come themselves from other still smaller seed-animals, and that thus they have never commenced to exist except when the world commenced to exist;—which accords very well with the Bible, which insinuates that the seeds have existed from the beginning.

Nature has given us, in sleep and swoons, examples which ought to make us assume that death is not a cessation of all functions, but solely a suspension of certain preeminently perceptible functions. I have explained in other works an important point, which, not having been sufficiently considered, has led men more easily to adopt the doctrine of the mortality of souls, namely, this point: that a great number of small perceptions, being equal and balancing each other, and having no set-off or anything whereby to distinguish them, are not remarked by us, and that hence we do not remember them. But to conclude from this that in such states the soul is altogether without functions, is just as when the vulgar believe and assert that there is a void, and that there

is nothing wherever there is no matter perceptible; and that the earth is without movement, because its movement, being uniform and without shakes, is not perceptible. We have an infinity of small perceptions that we cannot distinguish; for instance, a great stunning noise, as the murmur of a vast assembly of people, is composed of all the small murmurs of particular persons, which we cannot perceive in part, but whereof we nevertheless have a feeling, for otherwise we should not feel anything. Thus, when an animal is deprived of organs that furnish it with tolerably distinct perceptions, it does not follow that there do not remain in it smaller and more uniform perceptions, nor that it is deprived of all organs and all perceptions. The organs are merely enveloped and reduced to small volume; but the order of nature demands that everything should redevelop itself and return some day in a perceptible state, and that there is in these vicissitudes a certain well-regulated progress which causes things to die and become more perfect. It seems that Democritus himself has seen this resuscitation of animals, for Plotinus attributes to him the teaching of the doctrine of resurrection.

All these considerations show, how not only the particular souls but even the animals subsist, and that there is no reason to believe in an entire extinction of souls, or even an entire destruction of animals; and that hence we need not have recourse to a universal spirit, and thus to deprive nature of its particular and subsisting perfections; to do which would be indeed not sufficiently to consider order and harmony.* There is, moreover, much in the doctrine of a single universal spirit that does not sustain itself, and becomes involved in greater difficulties than the ordinary doctrine.

For instance: it is at once apparent that the comparison of the air that causes various pipes of an organ to sound differently flatters the imagination; but it explains nothing, and rather insinuates the very reverse. For this universal breath of air in the pipes is nothing but a collection of a quantity of

* The eternal existence and immortality of the same animals and animal souls or monads is one of the most important points in Leibnitz's system, and is in point of fact identical with modern doctrines on the conservation of force, cells, &c.—*Translator's note.*

particular breaths of air, since each pipe is filled with its own air, which may pass even from the one pipe into the other; so that this comparison would rather establish particular souls, and favor even the transmigration of souls from one body to another, just as the air changes pipes. Again: if we imagine the universal spirit to be, like an ocean, composed of an infinite quantity of drops, that are detached from it whenever they animate some particular organic body, but reunite themselves in their ocean after the destruction of the organs, we still form a gross and material notion which does not touch the point, and is embarrassed with the same difficulties as the illustration of the breath of air. For as the ocean is a mass of drops, so God would also be an assemblage of all souls, in pretty much the same way as a beehive is an assemblage of those little animals; but, as this hive is not in itself a veritable substance, it is clear that the universal spirit would also not be in itself a veritable Being, and, instead of saying that it is the only spirit, we should say, rather, that it is nothing at all in itself, and that there is nothing in nature but particular souls whereof it is the mass. Besides, these drops, reunited in the ocean of the universal spirit after the destruction of the organs, would be, in fact, souls subsisting separate from matter, and thus we should fall again into what we wanted to avoid; particularly if those drops retained some remnant of their previous state or had still some functions, and could even acquire more sublime functions in this ocean of the divinity or of a universal spirit. On the other hand, if we assume that these souls, reunited in God, are without any proper functions, we fall into an opinion which is contrary to reason and all sound philosophy, namely, that any subsisting being can ever arrive at a state wherein it is without any function or impression. For one thing joined to another cannot but have its particular functions, which, joined to those of the other things, produce as a result the functions of the whole; otherwise the whole would have no functions since its parts had none. Besides, I have shown elsewhere that each being retains perfectly all the impressions it has received, even though these impressions be no longer perceptible separately, having become joined to so

many others. Thus the soul, reunited with the ocean of souls, would remain always the same particular soul it had been, but separated.

This shows how much more reasonable it is, and more conformable to the order of nature, to let particular souls subsist even in the animals and not outside in God, and thus to conserve not only the soul but likewise the animal, as I have explained above and in other writings; and, moreover, thus to let the particular souls remain always in action, that is, in particular functions which suit them and which contribute to the beauty and the order of the universe, instead of reducing them to the sabbath in God of the Quietists, that is, into a state of slothfulness and inutility. For so far as the beatific vision of blessed souls in heaven is concerned, it is quite compatible with the functions of their glorified bodies, which will always remain organic in their manner.

But if anyone should wish to assert that there are no particular souls at all, not even now, when the functions of thought and sensation are achieved by means of our bodily organs, he would be refuted by experience. which teaches us, it seems to me, that we are something in our individual particular self, something which thinks, apperceives, and wills; and that we are distinguished from other individuals, who think and will something else. Otherwise, indeed, we fall into the notion of Spinoza, or of similar authors, who maintain that there is only one single substance—namely, God—who thinks, believes and wills one thing in me, but who also thinks, believes and wills the very contrary in somebody else—an opinion whereof Mr. Bayle has well exposed the ridiculousness in some parts of his Dictionary. On the other hand, if there is nothing in nature but the universal spirit and matter, we must admit that if it is not the universal spirit itself which believes and wills opposite matters in different persons, it must be matter that is different and acts differently; but, if matter act, what is the use of a universal spirit? If matter, however, is nothing but a first passive, or a pure passive, how can we attribute actions to it? It is, therefore, much more reasonable to believe, that, besides God, who is the supreme active, there are a quantity of particular actives, since there are a quantity of particular and opposite actions and

passions that cannot be attributed to one and the same subject, and that these actives are none other than the particular souls.

Moreover, we know that there are degrees in all things. There is an infinity of degrees between any kind of movement you may suppose and perfect rest, between solidity and perfect fluidity without any power of resistance whatever, between God and Nothingness. In the same manner there is also an infinity of degrees between any active you may suppose, and the purely passive. Hence it is not reasonable to admit only a single active, that is, the universal spirit, with only a single passive, that is, matter.

It is further to be considered that my *matter* is not a thing opposed to God, but rather opposed to the limited active,* that is, to souls, or to the form. For God is the Supreme Being opposed to nothingness, from whom matter as well as all forms result, whereas the pure passive is something more than nothingness, being capable of somewhat, whilst no attribute can be attached to the Nothing. Hence we must combine, in our thinking, with every particular portion of matter particular forms, that is, souls and spirits conformable to it.

I do not wish to recur here to a demonstrative argument which I have elsewhere employed, and drawn from the unities or simple things, wherein the particular souls are included, which indispensably obliges us not only to admit particular souls, but to avow likewise that they are by their nature immortal and as indestructible as the universe; and—what is more—that each soul is, in its way, a mirror of the universe without any flaw, containing in itself an order corresponding to that of the universe itself—an order which the souls vary and represent in an infinity of ways, all different from each other and all veritable, thus multiplying, as it were, the universe as many times as possible, and in this way approaching the Divinity as much as possible according to their different degrees, and giving to the universe all the perfection of which it is capable.

* In Fichte's terminology: the Non-Ego is opposed only to the Ego and not to God.—*Translator's note.*

After this, I do not see what reason or excuse any one can have to oppose to the doctrine of particular souls. Those who do so, agree that that which is within us is an effect of the universal spirit. But the effects of God are subsisting, not to mention that even the modification and effects of His creatures are in some manner durable, and that their impressions merely connect with each other without being thereby annihilated. Hence if, conformably to reason and experience, and as we have shown, the animal, with its more or less distinct perceptions and with certain organs, subsists always, and if thus that effect of God subsists always in those organs, why should it not be permitted to call it soul, and to say that this effect of God is an immaterial and immortal soul which resembles in some manner the universal spirit? especially as this doctrine removes all difficulties, as appears from what I have said here, and in other writings by me on the same subject.*

* Kant, in his *Critic of Pure Reason*, in the *Appendix to the Amphiboly of the Conceptions of Reflection*, enters upon quite an extended criticism of Leibnitz's system—a criticism that has always provoked discussion both as to the occasion and the ground of it. It seems to me that Kant took the occasion from Wolff's system, which at that time prevailed all over Germany, and was universally held to be a systematic representation of Leibnitz's doctrines, and that he was unacquainted with Leibnitz's own writings. Kant's criticism is this, that Leibnitz was, like all previous philosophers, a one-sided thinker; that is, a thinker who is not aware that the two opposite categories of reflection, which can be applied to every subject under consideration, are of equal validity, and that the truth is in taking both these opposite views on every occasion. This is the reason why the criticism occurs as an Appendix to the Amphiboly of the Conceptions of Reflection. Now, it is quite true that Leibnitz never uttered this truth with that clear self-consciousness which gives immortality to Kant's work; but in my opinion it is equally true that Leibnitz was fully aware of it, and became, indeed, aware of it the moment he discovered the Differential Calculus. Kant opposes Leibnitz to Locke, as if Leibnitz had held the one category of reflection only and Locke the other only. So far as Locke is concerned, Kant's criticism is true enough; he, like all English and most other philosophers, clings to his chosen category of reflection, and polemicizes against the opposite category as if that were altogether in the wrong. But any attentive student, by simply reading Leibnitz's correspondence with Clark, can convince himself that Leibnitz takes especial pains to give to the two opposite views equal validity, and protests only against Locke's one-sided assertion or application of a category of reflection. For further proof, I refer to my article on Leibnitz in the *North American Review* for January, 1869, p. 26–27.—*Translator's note.*